

**MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING OF  
THE TORRANCE PLANNING COMMISSION**

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

The Torrance Planning Commission convened in a regular session at 7:00 p.m. on Wednesday, August 17, 2011 in City Council Chambers at Torrance City Hall.

**2. SALUTE TO THE FLAG**

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Commissioner Horwich.

**3. ROLL CALL/ MOTIONS FOR EXCUSED ABSENCE**

Present: Commissioners Gibson, Rizzo, Skoll, Uchima, Weideman and Chairperson Horwich.

Absent: Commissioner Polcari.

Also Present: Sr. Planning Associate Santana, Planning Associate Martinez, Associate Civil Engineer Symons, Fire Marshal Kazandjian and Assistant City Attorney Sullivan.

**MOTION:** Commissioner Weideman moved to grant Commissioner Polcari an excused absence from this meeting. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Gibson and passed by unanimous voice vote.

**4. POSTING OF THE AGENDA**

Sr. Planning Associate Santana reported that the agenda was posted on the Public Notice Board at 3031 Torrance Boulevard on Thursday, August 11, 2011.

**5. APPROVAL OF MINUTES- None.**

**6. REQUESTS FOR POSTPONEMENTS**

Sr. Planning Associate Santana reported that the applicants have requested that Agenda Item 9A, PRE11-00005: Dafna Lahav (Peter John Simrose), be continued indefinitely to allow time for them to work with neighbors on the redesign.

**MOTION:** Commissioner Weideman moved to continue Agenda Item 9A indefinitely. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Uchima and passed by unanimous voice vote (absent Commissioner Polcari).

**7. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS #1 – None.**

Chairperson Skoll reviewed the policies and procedures of the Planning Commission, including the right to appeal decisions to the City Council.

8. **TIME EXTENSIONS** – None.

9. **CONTINUED HEARING**

9A. **PRE11-00005: DAFNA LAHAV (PETER JOHN SIMROSE)**

Planning Commission consideration for approval of a Precise Plan of Development to allow first and second story additions to an existing one-story, single-family residence on property located within the Hillside Overlay District in the R-1 Zone at 128 Via Colusa.

Continued indefinitely.

10. **WAIVERS** – None.

11. **FORMAL HEARINGS**

11A. **CUP11-00016: TORRES ARCHITECTS (CA TORRANCE CROSSROADS, INC)**

Planning Commission consideration for approval of a Conditional Use Permit to allow the operation of a yoga club with lockers and showers on property located in the PD Zone at 24329 Crenshaw Boulevard.

**Recommendation** – Approval.

Planning Associate Martinez introduced the request.

Dan Torres, Torres Architects, project architect, voiced his agreement with the recommended conditions of approval.

Heather Peterson, West Coast director for Corepower Yoga, provided background information about the yoga club's operation. She reported that both heated and non-heated classes will be offered, with a room temperature upwards of 98 degrees for the heated classes. She explained that high heat and humidity facilitate the movement of muscles and joints and aid in detoxification.

Responding to questions from the Commission, Ms. Peterson stated that people generally can tolerate the heat, but may become light-headed or dizzy the first couple of times and every instructor is CPR certified and each location is equipped with an AED (Automated External Defibrillator). She reported that doors will be locked during classes except during peak hours when there are overlapping classes because instructors handle the check-in of the students and there is no front desk staff. She confirmed that the doors will be equipped with crash bars so people within the facility can exit when the doors are locked.

Noting that the letter from the company (agenda material) mentions that 80 percent of customers are "young, affluent, highly educated women," Commissioner Gibson questioned whether there is an age limit. Ms. Peterson responded that there is no age limit, but older clientele tend to favor the non-heated classes.

In response to Commissioner Weideman's inquiry, Sr. Planning Associate Santana provided clarification regarding the parking at this shopping center. He explained that the Crossroads center has a 1:200 parking ratio, which was established when it was approved as a Planned Development; that the mix of retail/service/restaurant uses has not substantially changed in the years since it was approved; and that there may be parking deficiencies at certain times of the day due to the success of the businesses in the center.

Commissioner Uchima noted that the yoga studio is located next to two new restaurants that are taking over the former Claim Jumper building and expressed concerns that the studio's clients might have to park a considerable distance away during evening hours once the restaurants open.

Sr. Planning Associate Santana advised that staff felt that the yoga club would be a compatible use because the peak hours differ from most of the other businesses in the center.

Ms. Peterson reported that Corepower Yoga has studios across the country, some of which have very limited parking, and this has not been a problem because students simply bike, walk or run to classes. Mr. Torres later confirmed that there would be provisions for the parking of bikes.

In response to Commissioner Gibson's inquiry, Ms. Peterson reported that the yoga studio does not offer massages or other therapeutic services.

**MOTION:** Commissioner Gibson moved to close the public hearing. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Horwich and passed by unanimous roll call vote (absent Commissioner Polcari).

**MOTION:** Commissioner Weideman moved for the approval of CUP11-00016, as conditioned, including all findings of fact set forth by staff. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Gibson and passed by unanimous roll call vote (absent Commissioner Polcari).

Planning Associate Martinez read aloud the number and title of Planning Commission Resolution No. 11-048.

**MOTION:** Commissioner Weideman moved to adopt Planning Commission Resolution No. 11-048. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Gibson and passed by unanimous roll call vote (Commissioner Polcari).

**11B. DIV11-00003: DAVID BOYD (DOROTHY CAKE FAMILY TRUST)**

Planning Commission consideration for approval of a Division of Lot to allow the subdivision of one parcel into two on property located in the ML(C4) Zone at 20526 Hawthorne Boulevard.

**Recommendation:** Approval.

Planning Associate Martinez introduced the request and noted supplemental material available at the meeting consisting of revisions to Planning Resolution No. 11-049.

Commissioner Weideman noted that the staff report mentions that the project includes interim RV storage, but related his understanding that this was eliminated when the project was approved by the City Council.

Sr. Planning Associate Santana advised that the revised resolution (supplemental material) eliminates the interim RV parking.

David Boyd, project architect, voiced his agreement with the recommended conditions of approval. He reported that as part of the approval for a self-storage building, the applicant was required to tie two parcels together; that this cannot be accomplished because the parcels are separately owned and separately financed; and that the proposed Division of Lot is necessary so the project can go forward.

Sr. Planning Associate Santana noted that the Division of Lot does not affect the design or placement of the self-storage building and simply creates a separate parcel for it.

Sr. Planning Associate Santana requested that Condition No. 2 be modified to specify that time extensions must be approved by the Planning Commission, not the Community Development Director, and Mr. Boyd requested that Condition No. 2 be amended to clarify that the entitlement is good for two years after the granting of the Tentative Map.

**MOTION:** Commissioner Horwich moved to close the public hearing. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Rizzo and passed by unanimous roll call vote (absent Commissioner Polcari).

**MOTION:** Commissioner Weideman moved for the approval of DIV11-00003, as conditioned, including all findings of fact set forth by staff, with the following modifications:

No. 2 That if this Division of Lot is not used within two years after the granting of the ~~permit~~ Tentative Map, it shall expire and become null and void unless extended by the ~~Community Development Department~~ Planning Commission for an additional period provided for in Section 92.29.13.

The motion was seconded by Commissioner Uchima and passed by unanimous roll call vote (absent Commissioner Polcari).

Planning Associate Martinez read aloud the number and title of Planning Commission Resolution No. 11-049.

**MOTION:** Commissioner Weideman moved to adopt Planning Commission Resolution No. 11-049 as amended. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Horwich and passed by unanimous roll call vote (Commissioner Polcari).

**11C. CUP11-00017, DVP11-00004: GUILLERMO MONTER (OMNIS NETWORK, LLC)**

Planning Commission consideration for approval of a Conditional Use Permit to allow the operation of a data center within an existing office building in conjunction with a Development Permit to construct an exterior equipment enclosure on property located in the HBCSP (DA-2) Zone at 3655 Torrance Boulevard.

**Recommendation:** Approval.

Planning Associate Martinez introduced the request.

Guillermo Monter, project architect, voiced his agreement with the recommended conditions of approval.

James Fromm, Omnis Network, LLC, provided background information about the data center. He explained that businesses lease space for their servers in the data center and the center provides redundant power, redundant internet connections and a high level of security; that their existing server room cannot handle the heat load so cooling equipment will be located in an enclosure in the parking lot; and that the proposed expansion represents a great opportunity for the company because there is a global shortage of data center space.

In response to Commissioner Weideman's inquiry, Mr. Fromm confirmed that the facility would not emit RF radiation like a cell phone tower. He explained that the server room is a room full of racks with servers that are similar to PCs people have in their homes; that the servers generate a lot of heat since almost 100% of the electricity used is converted into heat; and Torrance is a great location because the cool air naturally draws heat from the vents.

Commissioner Rizzo questioned whether nearby residents would be impacted by exhaust, and Mr. Fromm explained that the vents are on the roof and the exhaust would have no impact on residents.

In response to Commissioner Rizzo's inquiry, Mr. Fromm reported that there will be one 2500 horsepower diesel generator for the first phase and one generator per floor in subsequent phases; that the generators have self-contained 3500-gallon fuel tanks; and that they will be tested once a month.

Commissioner Rizzo proposed that a condition be included requiring that the testing take place on weekdays during regular business hours.

Mr. Fromm indicated that he had no objection to such condition, noting that the generators will be housed in sound-attenuating enclosures.

In response to Commissioner Gibson's inquiry, Mr. Fromm explained that space can be leased by the rack, cabinet or cage and he anticipated having approximately 40 cages in the first phase, but most of the space leased would be cabinets.

Commissioner Gibson expressed concerns that there is a church that operates a preschool and elementary school next door to the subject property, noting that the Commission recently approved the church's expansion project.

Sr. Planning Associate Santana advised that staff has included conditions to mitigate the impact on adjacent properties, including requiring an acoustical analysis showing how noise will be attenuated and requiring all mechanical/electrical equipment to be fully enclosed or fully screened. He noted that Building Department staff have been working with the architect and the building contractor to ensure that everything is structurally sound and heat and ventilation issues are addressed.

In response to Commissioner Gibson's inquiry, Mr. Fromm reported that customers will be able to access their servers 24 hours a day, 7 days a week via a card and keypad entry system and there will be security on-site to make sure that equipment is not damaged.

Responding to Commissioner Uchima's inquiry, Mr. Fromm stated that the company owns the building and their intention is to eventually convert the remaining office space into data center and confirmed that adequate parking would be maintained for remaining office uses throughout the process. He noted that there is a condition requiring the removal of all equipment from the parking lot if the data center ceases operation so parking for the building would be fully restored. He reported that the generators are for emergency use in the event there is a power failure, which is very infrequent, noting that the power has gone out only once or twice at the existing facility over the past 11 years.

Commissioner Uchima questioned whether the data center would have a role in new "cloud" technology, and Mr. Fromm reported that cloud providers often lease space in data centers.

Commissioner Skoll expressed concerns about the potential for fires.

Mr. Fromm reported that there will be extensive fire monitoring equipment; that the building will be equipped with a pre-action fire sprinkler system; and that cooling/support equipment will be located in the center lane of the parking lot to preserve fire lane access.

Sr. Fire Prevention Officer Kazandjian noted that the applicant will have to comply with all state and local building codes.

Sr. Planning Associate Santana requested that a condition be included allowing the police access to video surveillance footage if there is an investigation, and Mr. Fromm agreed to this condition.

In response to Commissioner Gibson's inquiry, Mr. Fromm reported that cooling equipment would be in the parking lot adjacent to the Marriott Residence Inn.

Responding to Chairperson Skoll's inquiry, Mr. Fromm expressed confidence that parking spaces remaining after all phases of the conversion have been completed would be adequate because there would be no other businesses in the building other than the data center. He reported that while the church next door sometimes uses the parking, this is done without permission.

Commissioner Gibson expressed concerns about project's impact on the church next door, particularly with regard to school children due to the fact that customers can come and go 24 hours a day.

Sr. Planning Associate Santana advised that staff views the project from a land use/zoning perspective; that this project is comparable to a public utility, such as an old Pac Bell utility bank, but one that uses a different form of technology; and that the data center is located in a commercial building that will still be serving a commercial purpose and meets the City's zoning standards. He stated that staff believes the project will be an asset to the community because the services provided will benefit Torrance businesses that either don't have the space or cannot accommodate this technology due to outdated structures.

Mr. Fromm reported that while customers are permitted access 24/7, it is rare for someone to come to service the equipment, explaining that he rents space for equipment in a data center in downtown Los Angeles and has only been there once in six years.

**MOTION:** Commissioner Horwich moved to close the public hearing. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Rizzo and passed by unanimous voice vote (absent Commissioner Polcari).

**MOTION:** Commissioner Rizzo moved for the approval of CUP11-00017 and DVP11-00004, as conditioned, including all findings of fact set forth by staff, with the following modifications:

**Add**

- That the applicant shall grant access to video monitoring equipment footage upon request by the Torrance Police Department for purposes of completing investigations related to incidents reported at the facility.
- That all testing of emergency generators and related equipment shall take place Monday through Friday, between 9:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m.

The motion was seconded by Commissioner Weideman and passed by a 5-1 roll call vote, with Commissioner Gibson dissenting (absent Commissioner Polcari).

Planning Associate Martinez read aloud the number and title of Planning Commission Resolution Nos. 11-050 and 11-051.

**MOTION:** Commissioner Rizzo moved to adopt Planning Commission Resolution Nos. 11-050 and 11-051 as amended. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Weideman and passed by 5-1 roll call vote, with Commissioner Gibson dissenting (Commissioner Polcari).

12. **RESOLUTIONS** – None.

13. **PUBLIC WORKSHOP ITEMS**- None.

14. **MISCELLANEOUS ITEMS** - None.

15. **REVIEW OF CITY COUNCIL ACTION ON PLANNING MATTERS**

Sr. Planning Associate Santana reported that the Urgency Ordinance concerning the moratorium on the licensing of massage establishments was considered by the City Council on August 16 and continued to August 23.

16. **LIST OF TENTATIVE PLANNING COMMISSION CASES**

Sr. Planning Associate Santana reported that the September 7 Planning Commission meeting has been cancelled.

17. **ORAL COMMUNICATIONS**

17A. Commissioners congratulated Sr. Planning Associate Santana on the birth of his son.

17B. Sr. Planning Associate Santana thanked Commissioners for the baby gift.

**17C.** Commissioner Horwich noted that parking spaces in the lot adjacent to the West Annex are not double-striped, which is a City requirement.

Sr. Planning Associate Santana advised that staff is aware of this deficiency and it will be corrected.

**17D.** Chairperson Skoll commended Sr. Planning Associate Santana for his handling of tonight's meeting and echoed congratulations on the birth of his son.

**18. ADJOURNMENT**

At 8:25 p.m., the meeting was adjourned to Wednesday, September 21, 2011 at 7:00 p.m.

Approved as Submitted September 21, 2011 s/ Sue Herbers, City Clerk
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